## 

## A definition of LANGUAGE

* the words, their pronunciation, and the methods of combining them used and understood by a community
* audible, articulate, meaningful sound as produced by the action of the vocal organs
* a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures, or marks having understood meanings
* the suggestion by objects, actions, or conditions of associated ideas or feelings
* the means by which animals communicate
* a formal system of signs and symbols including rules for the formation and transformation of acceptable expressions

In [linguistics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), **grammar** is the set of [structural](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structural) rules that govern the composition of [clauses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clause_%28linguistics%29), [phrases](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phrase), and [words](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Words) in any given [natural language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_language). In some books, spelling and punctuation is included in grammar.

****

**Contents**

1. Adjectives
2. Adverbs
3. Articles
4. Nouns
5. Verbs
6. Prepositions
7. Pronouns
8. Conjunctions
9. Interjections
10. Tenses
11. Subject, verbs and objects
12. Conditionals
13. Determiners
14. Qualifiers
15. Subjunctive
16. Direct and reported speech
17. Independent and dependent clauses
18. Grammar rules
19. English vocabulary
20. Improving vocabulary by learning root words
21. Prefixes
22. Suffixes
23. Collocations
24. Phrasal verbs
25. Synonyms
26. Antonyms
27. Learning foreign language words
28. Punctuation marks
29. Passive and active voice
30. Sentences

**Adjectives**

An adjective is a word used to describe a noun.

**Types of Adjectives**

Following are the kinds of adjectives, which are commonly used:

1. **Adjectives of Quality:**
   * Adjectives of Quality answer the question **‘Of what kind’**
   * Examples : Large, Small, Intelligent, Beautiful
2. **Adjectives of Quantity:**
   * Adjectives of Quantity answer the question **‘How much’**
   * Examples : Some, Little, Any, Enough
3. **Adjectives of Number:**
   * Adjectives of Number answer the question **‘How many’**
   * Examples : Two, Seven, Second, Third
4. **Demonstrative Adjectives:**
   * Demonstrative Adjectives answer the question **‘Which’**
   * Examples : This, That, These, Those
5. **Interrogative Adjectives:**
   * Interrogative Adjectives are used to ask questions about a noun.
   * Examples : What, Which

# Comparison of Adjectives

Ram is tall.  
Mary is taller than Ram.  
John is the tallest of the three.  
  
In the second sentence, the word ‘taller’ is the comparative form of the adjective. The comparative form of the adjective denotes a higher degree of the adjective ‘tall’ when two people or things are compared.  
  
In the third sentence, the word ‘tallest’ is the superlative form of the adjective. The superlative form of the adjective denotes the highest degree of the adjective ‘tall’ when more than two people or things are compared.  
  
Here are some simple rules to keep in mind when forming comparatives and superlatives.  
  
**RULE 1**  
**For most adjectives, ‘er’ is added for the comparative form and ‘est’ for the superlative form.**  
Tall – Taller – Tallest  
Strong – Stronger – Strongest  
Short – Shorter – Shorter  
Kind – Kinder - Kindest  
  
**RULE 2**

**For adjectives ending with ‘e’, ‘r’ is added for the comparative form and ‘st’ for the superlative form.**

Wise – Wiser – Wisest  
Large – Larger – Largest  
Nice – Nicer – Nicest  
Fine – Finer - Finest  
  
**RULE 3**  
**For adjectives ending with ‘y’, ‘y’ is removed and ‘ier’ is added for comparative form and ‘iest’ for the superlative form.**  
Lazy – Lazier – Laziest  
Crazy – Crazier – Craziest  
Wealthy – Wealthier – Wealthiest  
Heavy – Heavier - Heaviest  
  
**RULE 4**  
**Usually for longer adjectives, ‘more’ + adjective is used for comparative form and ‘most’ + adjective is used for superlative form.**  
Handsome – More Handsome – Most Handsome  
Beautiful – More Beautiful – Most Beautiful  
Intelligent – More Intelligent – Most Intelligent  
Difficult – More Difficult – Most Difficult  
  
**RULE 5**  
**Irregular Adjectives: There are some irregular adjectives for which the comparative and superlative form follow no particular rule.**  
Good – Better – Best  
Bad – Worse – Worst  
Many – More – Most  
Little – Less - Least

**Adverbs**

An adverb is a word which modifies the meaning of a verb, adjective or another adverb.

**Types of Adverbs**

There are **seven** classes of commonly used adverbs:

1. **Adverbs of Time:** These adverbs are used to answer the question **‘when’**.  
   Examples : Now, Yesterday, Today, Once
2. **Adverbs of Frequency:** These adverbs are used to answer the question **‘how often’**.  
   Examples : Seldom, Rarely, Often, Frequently
3. **Adverbs of Place:** These adverbs are used to answer the question **‘where’**.  
   Examples : Out, In, Forward, Everywhere
4. **Adverbs of Manner:** These adverbs are used to answer the question **‘how’**.  
   Examples : Honestly, Bravely, Happily
5. **Adverbs of Degree:**These adverbs are used to answer the question **‘how much’** or **‘to what extent’.**  
   Examples : Fully, Partly, Altogether, Almost
6. **Adverbs of Affirmation and Negation:** These adverbs are used to **confirm or deny**.  
   Examples : Certainly, Surely, Absolutely
7. **Adverbs of Reason:** These adverbs are used to give the **reason.**
8. Examples : Therefore, Hence

**Placement of Adverbs**

Adverbs can be used in diverse ways, which means that they are very flexible in sentences; they can be moved around quite a bit without causing any grammatical irregularities.

Take a look at the following sentence: *The speaker grimly faced the audience.* The adverb in this sentence is ‘grimly’; moving it around a little, we get *The speaker faced the audience grimly*. There is nothing wrong with either sentence. What this goes to show is that an adverb can be positioned at multiple points in a sentence, and the guide below will help you decide where your chosen adverb should go:

**Adverbs used to begin sentences/clauses**

*Connecting adverbs* - To place an adverb at the beginning of a sentence or clause is also known as ‘initial position adverb placement’, and the adverbs that are commonly used in these positions are known as ‘connecting adverbs’, such as:

*Consequently, However, Next, Still, Then*

These adverbs are known as connecting adverbs, quite simply, because they are used at the beginnings of phrases and sentences to connect them to what has been said before. For e.g.:

*I did not care for her tone. However, I let it go.*

*I began to dislike my course within months having signed up for it. Consequently, I never did well.*

*That was the Medieval section of the museum; next, we have the Industrial Revolution.*

***Adverbs of time***

Time adverbs, like ‘tomorrow’, ‘yesterday’ and ‘sometimes’, are among the most flexible of all adverbs, and can often take initial position. For e.g.

*Yesterday I was very busy, which is why I was unable to meet you.*

*Tomorrow I am leaving for Calcutta.*

*Sometimes we feel as if we do not belong in this group.*

**Adverbs in the middle**

*Focusing adverbs*

1. ‘Focusing adverbs’ are those adverbs that emphasise a part of the clause or sentence to which they belong, and are generally used mid-sentence. Focusing adverbs include adverbs of frequency (often, rarely, never, always, etc), adverbs of certainty (perhaps, probably, certainly, maybe, etc) and adverbs of comment (adverbs that are used to express opinion, such as *smartly*, *responsibly, intelligently*, etc). For e.g.:

*You are always late.*

*I will probably be absent at the party.*

*He acted responsibly by informing the authorities about the wallet he had found.*

Note: Adverbs of frequency are used before the main verb, not the auxiliary verb.

**Adverbs to end sentences**

This is the most common position for adverbs in sentences.

***Adverbs of manner***

Adverbs of manner are used to describe how something is done, and are generally placed at the ends of sentences or clauses. For e.g.:

*He wrote the answers correctly.*

*His stammer caused him to speak haltingly.*

***Adverbs of place***

Adverbs of place are used to describe the place where an event occurs, and are also positioned at the ends of sentences or clauses. For e.g.:

*Father is sleeping upstairs.*

*In a couple of days I will be travelling north.*

***Adverbs of time***

Adverbs of time, as discussed earlier, can also find their ways to the ends of sentences or clauses. For e.g.:

*I leave tomorrow afternoon.*

**Forming Adverbs from Adjectives**

Here are some guidelines on forming adverbs from adjectives:

1. In a large number of the cases, the adverb can be formed by simply adding ‘-ly’ to the adjective.

**ADJECTIVE**                                            **ADVERB**

Cheap                                                              Cheaply

Quick                                                              Quickly

Strong                                                             Strongly

1. If the adjective ends in with ‘y’, replace the ‘y’ with an ‘i’ and add ‘-ly’.

ADJECTIVE                                                  ADVERB

Ready                                                              Readily

Merry                                                              Merrily

Easy                                                                Easily

1. If the adjective ends with ‘-le’, replace the ‘e’ at the end with ‘y’.

ADJECTIVE                                                  ADVERB

Understandable                                               Understandably

Forcible                                                           Forcibly

Possible                                                           Possibly

1. If the adjective ends with ‘-ic’, add ‘-ally’.

ADJECTIVE                                                  ADVERB

Idiotic                                                             Idiotically

Tragic                                                              Tragically

Basic                                                               Basically

An exception to this rule is ‘public’, whose adverbial form is ‘publicly’.

1. Some adjectives do not change form at all.

ADJECTIVE                                                  ADVERB

Fast                                                                 Fast

Straight                                                           Straight

Hard                                                                Hard

1. In the case of the adjective ‘good’, the corresponding adverb is ‘well’.

**Articles**

The English language utilises two articles: **‘a/an’ and ‘The’.**

**‘a/an’** are known as **indefinite articles** because the identity of the thing or person being spoken about is left indefinite. They **refer to any member of a group**.

An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

You may have heard this many times; as you might have realised, it does not refer to a particular apple but to any apple.

Let’s watch a movie.

This sentence refers to watching any movie and not a particular one.

**‘The’** is known as a **definite article** because it is used in relation to a **particular thing or person.**

The dog attacked me and ran.

Notice how the reference is not left indefinite. It is clear that a particular dog is being spoken about. A particular dog attacked the speaker.

I finally got the dress we liked

This refers to a particular dress and not just any dress.

Let us take one more example to ensure clarity.

Please give me a pencil.

This is in reference to any pencil.

Please give me the pencil.

This is in reference to a particular pencil, a pencil that has either been previously spoken about or is visible to both.

**Usage of ‘a’ and ‘an’**

Indefinite articles ‘a/an’ are used as follows.

**‘a’** is used before a word beginning with a **consonant sound**.  Consonant letters in the English alphabet are B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M,N, P, Q, R, S, T, V,W, X,Y, Z.

A boy, a cat, a dog, a fight, a gym, a horse, a joke, a kite, a lion, a mirror, a noise, a pin, a quilt etc.

**‘an’** is used before a word beginning with a **vowel sound**. Vowel letters in the English alphabet are A, E, I, O, U.

An apple, an elephant, an idiot, an orange, an umbrella.

As mentioned earlier, usage is on the basis of sound and not only the letter the word starts with. Let me explain.

“An hour”  
“An honest man”   
“A one eyed dog”

Do these seem wrong to you?

They’re not and the reason is simply that ‘usage is on the basis of sound’. The words 'hour' and 'honest' both begin with a vowel sound, as the consonant 'h' is not pronounced. Similarly, the word 'one' begins with the consonant sound of 'w' and hence is written as 'a one eyed dog', not 'an one eyed dog'.

**Nouns**

A noun is a word used as the name of a person, place or thing.

**Types of Nouns**

There are four kinds of nouns which are commonly used:

1. **Proper Nouns**:Proper Noun is the name of a particular person or place. Proper nouns always begin with a capital letter.  
   Examples : Sita, Rajesh, Delhi, Kanpur
2. **Common Nouns**:Common Noun is a name given in common to every person or thing of the group. Common nouns begin with a capital letter only if it is the first word of the sentence.  
   Examples : Girl, Boy, City, Tiger
3. **Collective Nouns**:Collective Nouns are those nouns that denote a group of people, animals, objects, concepts or ideas as a single entity.  
   Examples : Army of Soldiers, Class of Students, Crew of Sailors, Band of Musicians
4. **Abstract Nouns**: Abstract Noun is the name of a quality, action or state. You cannot see, hear, smell or taste an abstract noun.  
   Examples : Kindness, Loyalty, Childhood, Sickness, Laughter

**Using Nouns to Show Possession**

Possessive nouns are those nouns that show possession. Possessive Nouns are used to show ownership.

 A noun is possessive only when a phrase can be modified to say that an idea or commodity belongs to something or someone. Possessive nouns are an integral part of learning English, use them as often as you can to gain confidence.  
**In the singular form, the possessive case is formed by adding 's to the noun.**

* The clothes of the girl.   
  *The girl’s clothes.*
* The toys of the boy.   
  *The boy’s toys.*
* Mary goes to this school.  
  *This is Mary’s school.*

King’s castle, grandfather’s stick, my dog’s bowl and all of the above are formed by adding the 's.

Modify the following sentences by using the apostrophe (') to show possession:

The king’s servants.

The computer’s cover.

My phone’s charger.

* The servants of the king.
* Cover of the computer.
* The charger of my phone.

**For certain words, instead of 's, only ' is used to avoid a hissing noise. Keep this is mind when using possessive nouns.**

**Some examples would be:**

* Boss’ office.
* Dr.Briuss’ house.
* For goodness’ sake.

**There are two rules to follow in case the noun is in plural form.**

* If the noun ends in *s* then the possessive case is formed by adding the apostrophe  
  E.g. the donkeys’ tail, the boys’ hostel, the cousins’ aunt.
* If the noun does not end in *s* then the possessive case is formed by adding 's.   
  E.g. the children’s park, the men’s room.

*It’s simple as long as you know the plural form of the noun. The plural form of ‘god’ will be ‘gods’ and so the apostrophe will be used after 's' (gods’). In case of nouns like ‘woman’, the plural form is ‘women’ and so the apostrophe followed by 's' will be utilized(women’s).*

Add the apostrophe in the following sentences.

* Our cousins short uncle.                  (Apostrophe can be before or after 's')
* Businessmens briefcase.                (Businessmen’s)
* The ladies washroom.                     (Ladies’)

Here are some more examples to show you other possible cases.

* Alex and Philip’s shop**. (Two nouns are used closely and showing joint possession; here, the apostrophe will be used with the second noun)**
* Shakespeare’s and Wordsworth’s works**. (Two nouns are used together yet separate possession is implied thus the apostrophe is used with both nouns)**

**Nouns as Adjective**

Sometimes in the English language, a noun is used to describe another noun; in other words, the first noun performs the function of an adjective. Look at the following examples:

*Basketball coach* – here the noun *basketball* is being used to describe the noun *coach*

*Garment shop* – here the noun *garment* is being used to describe the noun *shop*

*Painting exhibition* – here the noun *painting* is being used to describe the noun *exhibition*

**Note:**

1. In general, like adjectives, nouns being used as adjectives are used in the singular form, although in the case of certain words, like *clothes*, *customs*, *sports*, etc, an exception is made.
2. Multiple nouns can also be used as adjectives, as in *school cricket team coach*.

**Verbs**

A verb is a word that describes an action or occurrence or indicates a state of being.

**Types of Verbs**

We can divide verbs into transitive and intransitive verbs.

**Transitive Verbs**: These verbs involve a direct object.

Example 1: The boy throws the ball.

Here ‘throws’ is the verb and ‘ball’ is the direct object.

Example 2: The man reads the book.

Here ‘reads’ is the verb and ‘book’ is the direct object 

**Intransitive Verbs**: These verbs do not involve a direct object.

Example 1: The boy throws.

Here the verb ‘throws’ is used intransitively.

Example 2: The man reads quickly.

Here the verb ‘reads’ is used intransitively.

# Regular and Irregular Verbs

The distinction between regular verbs and irregular verbs is a very simple one:

[**Regular Verbs**](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/list-of-regular-verbs)

Those verbs that form their past participle with ‘d’ or ‘ed’ are *regular verbs*. These verbs do not undergo substantial changes while changing forms between tenses.

1. If the verb ends with a vowel, only ‘d’ is added. For example:

**PRESENT TENSE                             PAST TENSE**

Share                                                   Shared

Scare                                                   Scared

Dare                                                     Dared

1. If the verb ends with a consonant, ‘ed’ is added. For example:

**PRESENT TENSE                             PAST TENSE**

Want                                                   Wanted

Shout                                                  Shouted

Kill                                                       Killed

[**Irregular Verbs**](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/list-of-irregular-verbs)

Those verbs that undergo substantial changes when changing forms between tenses are *irregular verbs*. The changed forms of these verbs are often unrecognisably different from the originals. For example:

**PRESENT TENSE                             PAST TENSE**

                        Go                                                       Went

                        Run                                                     Ran

                        Think                                                   Thought

There is no way to tell what form an irregular verb is going to take in a changed tense; the only option for an English speaker is to commit the changes to memory. With practice, it will become a matter of habit.

**Finite and Non-finite Verbs**

Examine the following sentences:

*I drove to the concert.*

*He broke the vase.*

*She will take it off your hands soon.*

The verbs in the above sentences are ‘drove’, ‘broke’ and ‘take’. These are *finite verbs*; verbs whose form is governed by the subject of the sentence. What this means is that these verbs change their form depending on person (first person, second person, third person, singular/plural) and tense. For example, ‘drove’ is the past tense of ‘drive’. Thus, if sentence were to be in the present tense, it would be *I drive...*. Similarly, if ‘I’ were to be replaced by ‘he’, it would be *He drives*. Finite verbs can form independent clauses, i.e. clauses that can work as complete sentences.

Non-finite verbs, on the other hand, are those that do not change form based upon the subject. These are of three types:

1. [Participle](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/participles-gerunds) – this includes the past and present participles of verbs, which function as adjectives (*the* dying *man, the sleeping giant*, etc).
2. [Gerund](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/participles-gerunds) – this refers to verbs (in their *–ing* form) that function as nouns (*the* writing *on the wall*, exercising *is a necessary activity for continued good health)*.
3. [Infinitive](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/participles-gerunds) – the verb in its basic form, often but not necessarily preceded by ‘to’, functioning as noun (*to finish the task without any more hitches was his goal*), adjective (*I’m sorry, I have much work to do at the moment*), or adverb (*he called to discuss the matter*).

**Participles, Gerunds & Infinitives**

Participles, gerunds and Infinitives are called verbals. Verbals are words which are formed from a verb but which function as a different part of speech.

**PARTICIPLE**

A participle is usually formed by adding –ing or –ed to a verb. **It functions as an adjective.**  
  
Examples:The **singing** bird was the main attraction at the event.  
                The **injured** man was waiting for the doctor.

**GERUND**

A gerund is formed by adding –ing to a verb. **It functions as a noun.**  
  
Examples: Sameer likes **reading** books.  
               **Smoking** is prohibited in the hospital.

**INFINITIVE**

An infinitive is formed by using the word ‘to’ plus the verb in its stem word. **It functions as a noun, adjective or adverb.**  
  
Examples:He was made **to clean** his room.  
                Shalini loves **to talk.**

**Auxiliary Verbs (sometimes known as ‘helping verbs’)**

There are 4 auxiliary verbs in the English language:

Be, Have, Will, Do

Each of these is followed by another verb, known as the *full verb*, in order to form

* Questions
* Negative statements
* Compound tense
* Passive voice

**Be**

‘Be’ can be used both as an auxiliary and as a full verb. It must first be noted that ‘be’ is an irregular verb:

            Simple present: I *am*, he/she/it *is*, we/they *are*

            Simple past: I/he/she/it *was*, we/they *were*

            Past participle: *been*

For compound tense (present/past continuous), use the ‘-ing’ form of the full verb with  the appropriate form of ‘be’.

            Present continuous: He *is playing* outside.

            Past continuous: He *was playing* outside.

            Present perfect continuous: He *has been playing* outside.

            Past perfect continuous: He *had been playing* outside.

For passive voice, use the past participle of the full verb with the appropriate form of ‘be’.

            Simple past/present: The damage *is/was* done.

            Present/past perfect: The damage *has been/had been* done.

            Future: The damage *will be* done.

**Have**

‘Have’ is also both an auxiliary and a full verb, and is irregular as well.

            Simple present: I/you/we/they *have*, he/she/it *has*

            Simple past: *had*

            Past participle: *had*

It is used to form compound tenses in active and passive voice.

Compound Tenses - Active Voice:

Present Perfect Simple: He *has* *played* outside.

Past Perfect Simple: He *had* *played* outside.

Present Perfect Continuous: He *has* been *playing* outside.

Past Perfect Continuous: He *had* been *playing* outside

Compound Tenses - Passive Voice:

Present/Past Continuous: The house *has/had* been *built*.

**Will**

‘Will’ functions only as an auxiliary verb, and is used to form the future tenses. It remains the same for all forms.

            Simple future: He *will play* outside.

            Future perfect: He *will have played* outside.

**Do**

‘Do’ can be used as both an auxiliary and a full verb, and is irregular.

            Simple present: I/we/you/they *do*, he/she/it/ *does*

            Simple past: *did*

            Past participle: *did*

As an auxiliary, ‘do’ is used in negative sentences and questions with most verbs (use the infinitive of the full verb) in simple past and simple present forms.

‘Do’ in Negative Sentences

            Simple present: He *does not* play outside.

            Simple past: He *did not* play outside.

‘Do’ in Questions:

            Simple present: *Does* he play outside?

            Simple past: *Did* he play outside?

In the following four cases, ‘do’ is not used in negative sentences or questions

1. When the full verb is ‘be’:

*Are you alright?*

1. The sentence already has an auxiliary verb:

*He is not playing outside.*

1. **The sentence contains a modal verb (can, may, must, need, ought to, shall, should):**

*We must not be caught.*

1. The question asks for the subject:

*Who wrote that book?*

**Stative Verbs**

Stative verbs are verbs that describe a state rather than an action. When describing states, they never the continuous (‘-ing’) form. Here are some examples of stative verbs and instances of their correct and incorrect usage.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| STATIVE VERB | CORRECT USAGE | INCORRECT USAGE |
| *Like* | *I like you.* | *I am liking you.* |
| *Love* | *I love you.* | *I am loving you.* |
| *Hate* | *I hate you.* | *I am hating you* |
| *Appear* | *It appears to be cloudy.* | *It is appearing to be cloudy.* |
| *Believe* | *I believe in God.* | *I am  believing in God.* |
| *Fit* | *This shoe fits me.* | *This shoe is fitting me.* |
| *Sound* | *This song sounds good.* | *This song is sounding good.* |
| *Remember* | *I remember everything.* | *I am remembering everything.* |

# Modal Verbs

There are 10 modal verbs in the English language:

* Can
* Could
* May
* Might
* Will
* Would
* Must
* Shall
* Should
* Ought to

**Uses:**

1. To indicate that something is probable or possible, or not so. For example:

* It is sunny today; it must be warm outside. = It is sunny today; it is probably warm outside.
* His mobile is not reachable; he may/might/could be travelling by metro. = His mobile is not reachable; it is possible that he is travelling by metro.
* This can’t be our bill. = It is not possible that this is our bill.

1. ‘Can’ and ‘could’ are used to refer to skills and abilities. For example:

* He can cover a hundred metres in under ten seconds.
* My father could see perfectly before the age of fifty.
* I can’t ride a horse*.*

1. ‘Must’ is used to indicate that something is necessary or of extreme importance, and ‘should’ is used to suggest that something is advisable. For example:

* You must do your homework.
* You mustn’t skip school.
* You should say sorry.
* You shouldn’t smoke.

1. ‘Can’, ‘could’ and ‘may’ are used to ask for, give and withhold permission. For example:

* Can I try my hand at it?
* Could we disperse early today?
* You may not enter the premises.

1. ‘Will’ and ‘would’ are used to refer to habits and inclinations.

* When I was a child, I would often climb trees.
* I will never refuse you anything.
* He would never do such a thing.

These verbs differ from ordinary verbs in 3 respects. These differences can be observed in the examples given above:

1. When used with the third person singular (*he, she*), they don’t require the addition of an ‘s’.
2. They can be used to form questions by inverting the structure of the sentence.
3. They can be followed directly by the verb, without the use of ‘to’.

**Prepositions**

A preposition is a word which shows the relation between the noun or pronoun and other words in the sentence.

There are three kinds of prepositions which are commonly used:

1. **Simple Prepositions**:  
     
   Prepositions like for, by, at, on, of, off, with, above, across
2. **Compound  and Phrase Prepositions**:  
     
   They are a group of words used like a single preposition. Examples - in regard to, according to, in favour of, because of, in order to
3. **Participial Prepositions**:  
     
   They are used without any noun or pronoun attached to them. Examples - considering, regarding, barring, concerning

**Prepositions of Place**

There are three prepositions of place:

*At*

‘At’ is used for a point:

*At the end of the lane.*

*At the door/entrance/exit.*

*At the corner.*

*At the desk.*

Note: There are many standard expressions that are exceptions to this rule:

*At home.*

*At work.*

*At school/college/university.*

*At the side.*

*In*

‘In’ is used for enclosed spaces:

*In Mumbai/India.*

*In the room.*

*In the store.*

*In my pocket/bag.*

*In the building/tower.*

Note: There are some standard expressions that are an exception to this rule:

*In the book/magazine/newspaper.*

*In the sky.*

*On*

‘On’ is used for surfaces:

*On the table.*

*On the rug.*

*On the floor.*

*On the cover.*

*On the page.*

Note: There are many standard expressions that are exceptions to this rule:

*On the bus/train/plane/ship.*

*On the radio/television.*

*On the left/right.*

*On the way.*

**Prepositions of Time**

There are three prepositions of time:

*At*

‘At’ is used for precise times:

*At ten o’clock.*

*At 10.30am.*

*At the moment/present/same time.*

*At sunrise/sunset/noon/dinnertime/bedtime/dusk/dawn.*

Note: *At night* is a standard expression that is an exception in this case

*In*

‘In’ is used for months, years, decades, centuries, and long periods of time:

*In January.*

*In 1991.*

*In the 70s.*

*In this century.*

*In the Dark Ages.*

Note: *In the morning(s)/afternoon(s)/evening(s)* are standard expressions that are exceptions in this case.

*On*

‘On’ is used for days and dates:

*On Wednesday.*

*On Wednesdays.*

*On the 10th of January*

*On Christmas.*

Note: ‘on’ is also used when you specify the day followed by the part of the day. For e.g. *on Wednesday mornings*.

**Prepositions of Movement**

There are 9 prepositions that pertain to movement:

**To**

‘To’ is used when there is a specific destination in mind. The destination can be a number of things:

A place:

I’m going to the doctor’s.

Can you direct me to the nearest post office?

An event:

Are you going to the party?

I have never been to a concert.

A person:

                                    She came up to me.

                                    I go to my father for advice.

A position:

                                    The bathroom is to your left.

                                    Keep to the left.

**Towards**

‘Towards’ is used in the following instances:

When one has movement in a particular direction in mind, rather than simply a destination:

He was walking menacingly towards me.

Or to refer to a position, in relation to a direction from the point of view of the speaker:

He was sitting with his back towards me.

**Through**

‘Through’ refers to the following types of movement:

Within a space, which can be thought of as surrounding, enclosing or around the object:

The train went through the tunnel.

Movement across something, i.e. from one side of it the other:

He cut through the gauze.

**Into**

‘Into’ refers to the following types of movement:

Movement from the outside to the inside of something that can be imagined as surrounding, enclosing or around the object:

He got into the car.

Movement causing something to hit something else:

He swerved into the tree.

**Across**

‘Across’ is used to describe:

Movement from one end of something to the other:

                                    He walked across the road.

                                    He strode across the bridge.

Something’s position when it stretches over the surface it is on:

                                    There was a barricade across the road.

To describe something’s position when it is at the opposite end from one’s position:

                                    We went to the restaurant across the road.

**Over**

‘Over’ is used in the following instances:

To describe something’s position when it is above something else:

The bottle is in the cabinet over the sink in the kitchen.

To describe something’s position when it covers a surface:

A white cloth had been spread over the corpse.

**Along**

‘Along’ is used to describe:

Movement in a line:

We walked along the river.

The collective position of a group of things that are in a line:

He lived one of the houses along the river.

**In**

‘In’ is used in the following instances:

Something’s position in relation to the area or space or place surrounding it:

                        We are going to have our picnic in the park.

                        I left my car in the garage.

To express towards the inside of something:

                        Put the pickle in the cabinet.

**On**

‘On’ is used in the following instances:

To describe something’s position in relation to a surface:

There was an array of food on the table.

To describe movement in the direction of a surface:

The rain falling on the roof kept me from sleeping.

**Pronouns**

A pronoun is a word used instead of a noun.

There are six kinds of commonly used pronouns:

1. **Personal Pronouns**: Personal Pronouns are used are substitutes for proper or common nouns.   
   Examples : I, he, she, mine, his, her, they, their
2. **Demonstrative Pronouns**: Demonstrative Pronouns are used to point out objects  
   Examples: this, that, these, those
3. **Indefinite Pronouns**: Pronouns which refer to things in a general way and not to someone or something in particular.  
   Examples: nobody, somebody, everybody, one (should not lie)
4. **Distributive Pronouns**: Pronouns which refer to persons or things one at a time are called Distributive pronouns.   
   Examples: each, either, neither
5. **Relative Pronouns**: A pronoun that relates a subordinate clause to the rest of the sentence is called a relative pronoun.  
   Examples: who -  (Raj is the boy) who (did the work)  
                     whose – (Raj is the boy) whose (books were lost)
6. **Interrogative Pronouns**: Pronouns used for asking questions are called Interrogative Pronouns.  
   Examples : what, which, who, whose, whom

**Conjunctions**

A conjunction is a word which joins to sentences to complete their meaning.

There are two kinds of conjunctions:

1. **Co-ordinating Conjunctions**: When the conjunction is used to join two statements of equal importance, the conjunction is said to be a co-ordinating conjunction.  
   Examples : and, but, or, not, for, either, neither
2. **Subordinating Conjunctions**: When the conjunction joins two statements, one of which depends on the other for its full meaning, the conjunction is said to be a subordinating conjunction.  
   Examples : before, after, since, because, if, though, which, who

Here are some examples of the use of conjuctions

Preeti is weak in Physics.  Shalini is weak in Physics.

**Preeti and Shalini are weak in Physics.** (note the plural verb is – are)

It was cold. I wore a sweater.

**It was cold so I wore a sweater.**

I will be late. There is a lot of traffic today

**I will be late because there is a lot of traffic today**

**Interjection**

An interjection is a word which expresses sudden feeling or emotion.

There are five kinds of interjections:

1. **Interjections to express greeting.**  
   Examples : Hello!
2. **Interjections to express joy.**  
   Examples : Hurray!
3. **Interjections to express approval.**  
   Example : Bravo!
4. **Interjections to express surprise.**  
   Example : Oh!
5. **Interjections to express grief.**  
   Example : Alas!

Here are some examples of the use of interjections

Hello! My name is Amit.

# Tenses

The concept of time can be split into:

1. **The Present - What you are currently doing.**

I eat, I am eating

1. **The Past - What you did some time back.**

I ate, I was eating

1. **The Future - What you will do later.**

I will eat, I will be eating

In the English language, tenses play an important role in sentence formation.

**The tense of a verb shows the time of an event or action.**

**There are four types of tenses. *Simple, Perfect, Continuous and Present Perfect Continuous and each of these has a present, past and future form.***

**PRESENT TENSES**

[SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/simple-present-tense)

In Simple Present, the action is simply mentioned and there is nothing being said about its completeness.

I eat.  
I sleep.  
I play.

[PRESENT CONTINUOUS TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/present-continuous-tense)

In Present Continuous, the action is on-going/ still going on and hence continuous.

I am eating.  
I am sleeping.  
I am playing.

[PRESENT PERFECT TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/present-perfect-tense)

In Present Perfect, the action is complete or has ended and hence termed Perfect.

I have eaten.  
I have slept.  
I have played.

[PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/present-perfect-continuous-tense)

In Present Perfect Continuous, the action has been taking place for some time and is still ongoing.

I have been eating.  
I have been sleeping.  
I have been playing.

**PAST TENSES**

[SIMPLE PAST TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/simple-past-tense)

In Simple Past, the action is simply mentioned and understood to have taken place in the past.

I ate.  
I slept.   
I played.

[PAST CONTINUOUS TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/past-continuous-tense)

In Past Continuous, the action was ongoing till a certain time in the past.

I was eating.  
I was sleeping.   
I was playing.

[PAST PERFECT TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/past-perfect-tense)

Past Perfect is used to express something that happened before another action in the past.

I had eaten.   
I had slept.   
I had played.

[PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/past-perfect-continuous-tense)

Past Perfect Continuous is used to express something that started in the past and continued until another time in the past.

I had been eating.   
I had been sleeping.   
I had been playing.

**FUTURE TENSES**

[SIMPLE FUTURE TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/simple-future-tense)

Simple Future is used when we plan or make a decision to do something. Nothing is said about the time in the future.

I will eat.  
I will sleep.  
I will play.

[FUTURE CONTINUOUS TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/future-continuous-tense)

The future continuous tense is used to express action at a particular moment in the future. However, the action will not have finished at the moment.

I will be eating at 9 a.m.  
I will be sleeping when you arrive.  
I will be playing at 5 p.m.

[FUTURE PERFECT TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/future-perfect-tense)

Future Perfect expresses action that will occur in the future before another action in the future.

I will have eaten before 10 a.m.  
I will have slept before you arrive.  
I will have played before 6 p.m.

[FUTURE PERFECT CONTINUOUS TENSE](http://www.englishleap.com/grammar/future-perfect-continuous-tense)

Future Perfect Continuous is used to talk about an on-going action before some point in the future.

I will have been sleeping for two hours when you arrive.  
I will have been playing for an hour when it is 5 p.m.

**Subjects, Verbs and Objects**

Subjects, verbs and objects are the basic units of any sentence; to be able to identify them and use them correctly is the one of the first steps to writing and speaking good English.

A *sentence*, of course, is the conventional unit of connected speech and writing: it is a grouping of words that together make sense as a statement, question, command or exclamation. Sentences

* Begin with a capitalised letter,
* Conclude with a full stop, a question mark or an exclamation mark,
* And are, at the most basic level, comprised of a *subject* and a *predicate*, or *verb*.

The subject is generally a noun, a noun phrase, or pronoun, about which something is said in the predicate, which usually follows it. Take the following sentence:

**The dog barked.**

Here, the subject is the dog, and the verb ‘barked’ describes what it is/was doing. The place of the noun in the sentence as the subject can be taken by noun phrases, such as *the five dogs*, or by pronouns, such as *I, you, he* and *she*.

 Another role played by nouns in sentences is that of the *object*: that which, directly or indirectly, receives the action performed by the subject. For example:

**The dog barked at the postman.**

Here, the postman is obviously the object: that which the subject’s action (the barking of the dog) is directed at. In this role too, pronouns such as *they, it, us, them, me,* etc can replace nouns.

To conclude, let us analyse another sentence and see if we can identify the subject-verb-object pattern:

**Rita was furious with me.**

Here,

1. ‘was’ acts as the verb that links the subject, ‘Rita’,
2. with the adjective ‘furious’,
3. and together they establish the relationship between the subject and the object, ‘me’ (used in place of the narrator’s name).

**Conditionals**

Conditionals are structures in English that establish what will happen *if* a certain event takes place or action is performed, i.e. if a certain condition is true, a certain result occurs.

There are four types of commonly used conditionals in English that are differentiated on the basis of the degree of *possibility* implied by each conditional: the first conditional, the second conditional, the third conditional and the zero conditional.

**First Conditional**

This conditional is used to talk about future events that might happen. It uses the present tense to discuss the possible future event. For e.g.:

**If it rains, we will have to cancel the picnic.**

**If you come with me, I will make it worth your while.**

**If I go abroad, I will get something back for you.**

**If you want until 1pm, you can go back with him.**

**If you visit Paris, you must see the Eiffel Tower.**

**Second Conditional**

This conditional is used to talk about unreal possibility or impossible events; they establish the course of action that would follow, were something to happen hypothetically. For e.g.:

**If I had a million dollars, I would buy a penthouse on Park Avenue.**

**I could stop working if I won the lottery.**

**If I were well-versed in the subject, I would help you with your assignment.**

**If I were you, I would ask her to marry me.**

**What would you do if it were to rain later?**

**Third Conditional**

This conditionals talks about the past, unlike the first and second which discuss events in the real or unreal future. These conditions, too, are therefore impossible, because they have either already occurred or might have occurred but won’t anymore. For e.g.:

**If I had studied a little more in college, life would have been easier.**

**If we had gotten to the airport on time, we would have caught our flight.**

**I could have asked him about the matter if he had shown up.**

Sometimes the ‘if’ clause is merely implied, as in

**I would have done it. (...if you had asked me to)**

**I wouldn’t have allowed it. (...if it had been tried with me)**

**Zero Conditional**

The zero conditional discusses an absolute certainty; the result of the condition is always true. The most common types of zero conditionals are scientific facts, like *If you cool water to zero degrees, it turns into ice.*

Zero conditionals, therefore, do not deal with the future or the past; they simply deal with facts. The ‘if’ in these conditionals can be replaced with ‘when’: *When you cool water to zero degrees, it turns into ice.*

**Determiners**

Determiners are a kind of noun modifier; they precede and are necessarily followed by nouns. While adjectives perform a similar function, the term ‘determiner’ refers to a relatively limited set of well-established words that can be said to ‘mark’ nouns.

The function of determiners is to ‘express reference’; i.e. they clarify what a noun is referring to. For e.g. when one says ‘*that* box’, the listener knows which box is being referred to.

There are many types of determiners:

1. **Articles**

There are three articles: *a*, *an*, and *the*.

**Indefinite Articles**

*A* and *an* are *indefinite articles* that serve the same purpose, but they cannot be used interchangeably, because ‘a’ is only used before words that begin with consonants, and ‘an’ is used only before words that begin with vowels. (Note: ‘an’ before ‘h’ when it is silent, as in ‘hour’ and ‘honour’; ‘a’ before ‘u’ and ‘eu’ when they sound like ‘you’, as in ‘European’ and ‘university’.

The uses of the indefinite article are as follows:

1. To refer to some member of a group, class or category. For e.g. *He is a doctor* (profession)*/an Indian* (nationality)*/a Hindu* (religion).
2. To refer to a kind of, or example of something. For e.g. *He has a large nose/a thick beard/a strange aunt.*
3. Preceding singular nouns, with the words ‘what’ and ‘such’. For e.g. *What a car! Oh, that’s such a shame!*
4. To mean ‘one’ object, whether a person or thing. For e.g. *The thieves stole a necklace and a portrait.*
5. To refer to something that is being mentioned for the first time. For e.g. *There was a chill in the air*.

Note:

1. We usually say *a* hundred, *a* thousand, *a* million, etc.
2. ‘A’ is not indiscriminately used to refer to singular objects; ‘one’ is used when emphasis is required. For e.g. *There is only one way out of this mess*.

**Definite Article**

‘The’ is known as the definite article in English. Its uses are as follows:

1. When something is being referred to that has already been mentioned. For e.g. *I saw a pretty girl at the mall today. The pretty girl did not, however, see me*.
2. When both parties involved in the conversation are aware of what is being discussed. For e.g. *Where is the restroom?*
3. To refer to unique objects. For e.g. *the sun, the moon, the Earth, the Taj Mahal.*
4. With superlatives and ordinal numbers (numbers used to rank a set of objects). For e.g. *Mt Everest is the tallest mountain on earth, Neil Armstrong was the first man on the moon.*
5. To refer to groups of people, geographical areas and oceans, and with decades or groups of years. For e.g. *the Americans, the Sahara/Pacific, the fifties/sixities/seventies/eighties*.
6. **Demonstratives**

*This, that, these* and *those* are known are demonstratives; they describe the position of an object, seen from the speaker’s viewpoint.

*This* and *these* (used for singular and plural nouns respectively) refer to objects that close by. For e.g. *Whose car is this? Whose cars are these?*

*That* and *those* (used for singular and plural nouns respectively) refer to objects that are further away. The closeness can be physical or psychological. For e.g. *Who lives in that house?*

1. **Numbers**

Numbers are cardinal (one, two, three, etc) and ordinal (first, second, third, etc). Cardinal numbers are adjectives that indicate quantity (*There are fives apples on the table*), and ordinal numbers indicate rank or order (*This is the first time for me on a plane*).

1. **Distributives**

The words *all*, *both*, *half*, *each*, *every*, *either* and *neither* are known as distributives.

*All, Both, Half*

These three words can be used in the following ways:

**All +**

            uncountable noun

*Don Bradman is the greatest batsman of all time.*

            ‘the’ + uncountable noun/countable noun in plural form

*We have all the time in the world.*

*All the people in the hall went quiet.*

            ‘my’, ‘your’, etc + uncountable noun/countable noun in plural form

*All my life I have been waiting for this moment.*

*All you friends have been invited to the party.*

‘this’, ‘that’ + uncountable noun/‘these’, ‘those’ + countable noun in plural form

*Look at all this dust!*

*I do not have time for all these formalities.*

**Both +**

‘the’ /‘my’, ‘your’, etc/‘these’, ‘those’ + countable noun in plural form (note: used only when two objects are being referred to)

*Both the dogs have passed away.*

*Both my ankles have been hurting since I jumped from the balcony.*

*Both these books must be returned within the week.*

**Half +**

            ‘a’ + uncountable noun

*We bought half a kilo of rice.*

            ‘the’/‘my’, ‘your’, etc/‘this’, ‘that’, ‘these’, ‘those’ + noun

*Half the village perished in the floods.*

*I spent half my inheritance on travelling the world.*

*You may have half (of) this cake.*

*Only half (of) those points are relevant.*

*Each, Every, Either, Neither*

See articles.

1. **Possessives**

Possessive pronouns and adjectives indicate who an object belongs to.

The pronouns are

*mine* (first person: *This car is mine = I own this car*)

*yours* (second person: *This car is yours = You own this car*)

*his, hers,* and *its* (third person: *This cars is his/hers* = *He/she owns this car*).

The corresponding adjectives are

*my*

*your*

*his, her, and it*

1. **Difference words**

*Other* and *another* are ‘difference words’; they refer to something different, or remaining, or more. *Other* is used with singular and plural nouns, while *another* is used strictly with singular nouns.

*What other colours can I get this in?*

*Is there another colour that this is available in?*

1. **Defining words**

*Which* and *whose* are ‘defining words’; they indicate which thing or person is being referred to.

*This is the house which I used to live in as a child.*

*This is the man whose window you broke.*

1. **Question words**

**Quantifiers**

Quantifiers form a sub-class under determiners; they are adjectives or phrases that serve to answer two possible questions: *How many?* and *How much?* For e.g. *a few, a little, much, many, most, some, any, enough,* etc are quantifiers.

*Quantifiers that describe quantity*

Words and phrases that describe quantity include *a little, none, a few,* etc. Some of these are used only with countable nouns (the ones that answer the question *How many?* such as *a few, a number of, several,* etc), some only with uncountable nouns (the ones that answer the question *How much?* such as *a little, a bit of,* etc) and some with both (the ones that answer both questions, such as *no/none, some, a lot of,* etc).

*Quantifiers that express attitude*

The words *few* and *little* and the phrases *a few* and *a little* serve to describe the speaker’s attitude to the quantity being described. The first two carry negatives suggestions, whereas the second two carry positive suggestions. For e.g. the phrase *I have little time* means that the speaker hardly has time, whereas the phrase *I have a little time* means that while the speaker may not have all the time in the world, s/he has enough for the purpose at hand.

*‘Enough’*

*Enough* is used to indicate the necessary amount or quantity; it is placed before nouns. For e.g. *There is enough time, You have enough money, Is there enough food?*, etc.

*Comparative quantifiers*

There are ten comparative or grade quantifiers: *much, many, more, most, few, fewer, fewest, little, less,* and *least*.

*Much, many, more* and *most* chart, in ascending order, increase; *much* is used only with uncountable nouns, *many* only with plural countable nouns, and *more* and *most* with both.

*I have much time. < I have more time. < I have the most time.*

*I have many apples. < I have more apples. < I have the most apples.*

*Few, fewer, fewest, little, less* and *least* chart decrease. The first three (in descending order) are used only with countable plural nouns. The second three (in descending order) are used only with uncountable nouns.

*He has few friends. > He has fewer friends. > He has the fewest friends.*

*He has little time. > He has less time. > He has the least time.*

**Subjunctive**

The subjunctive is a verb form in English that is relatively rare, but is structurally very simple. It is a special kind of present tense; for all verbs except the past tense of ‘be’ (‘were’), the subjunctive is the same as the infinitive without ‘to’. Therefore, the subjunctive is simply the basic verb form (for e.g., *do, work, demand, hire*), with the difference that no ‘s’ is added to the verb when it is used with the third person singular. For e.g. in the sentence *I suggested that he take the matter to the proper authorities*, ‘take’ is the subjunctive.

The subjunctive is used more often in American and written than in British and spoken English. It is used generally when talking about something that may or may not happen; it could be something that the speaker wants, hopes for, expects, or imagines. The following are more examples of subjunctives:

*If I* ***were*** *king, there would be no more famines.*

*The chairman requests that all members of the board* ***be*** *present at the meeting.*

*I demand that he* ***provide*** *us with a full explanation.*

As you can see, the structure that the subjunctive takes is generally as follows: *[subject] (I) [verb] (demand) ‘that’ [object] (he) [subjunctive] (provide)...* The verbs that are commonly used before subjunctives are *advise, ask, beg, decide, decree, desire, dictate, insist, intend, move, order, petition, propose, recommend, request, require, resolve, suggest, urge, and vote*.

Another pattern exists as well, in which ‘that’ is preceded by an expression rather than the verb. For e.g. in the sentence *It is essential that the goods be delivered on time*, ‘it is essential’ is the expression. The expressions that are commonly used with subjunctives are *it is desirable/imperative/essential/necessary*/*important*, etc.

Now, in the example *If I were king...*, there seems to be a slight problem, which is that ‘king’ is a singular noun, so the verb preceding it should, it appears, be ‘was’, not ‘were’. However, this construction does not use ‘was’. ‘Were’ is the ‘past subjunctive’ of ‘be’, and is formally always with ‘if’, and certain other words/phrases, such as ‘I wish’ and ‘as if’; it is simply a quirk of the language.  The following are more examples of the same:

*If I were you, I would take a stand on the issue.*

*If he were not so intelligent, I would have fired him for his insolence.*

*I wish she weren’t so dull.*

*You act as if you were king.*

**Direct and Reported Speech**

There are two ways in language of conveying what someone else has said: *direct/quoted* *speech* and *indirect/reported speech*.

The former, *direct/quoted speech*, involves quoting the exact words uttered by the person, within quotation marks. For example *She said, ‘I won’t be coming home tonight.’* is an example of direct speech.

*Indirect/reported speech*, on the other hand, does not have to be within quotes or word-for-word. In fact, unless one is relaying the exact words spoken, one should never use quotation marks. For example, *She told us that she wouldn’t be coming home that night* is an example of reported speech. Note that the verb tense necessarily changes in reported speech. This is because when we report speech, we are talking, obviously, about something that was said in the past. Hence, it becomes necessary to use the past tense of the verb.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DIRECT SPEECH | REPORTED SPEECH |
| He said, ‘I’m fine.’ | He said that he was fine. |
| He said, ‘I’ve been married for 3 years.’ | He said that he had been married for 3 years. |
| He said, ‘I went to the theatre yesterday.’ | He said that he had gone to the theatre the day before. |
| He said, ‘The show was already underway when the chief guest arrived.’ | He said that the show was already underway when the chief guest arrived. (*no change in tense)* |

Another thing to note is that modal verbs (*will, can, must, shall, may*) also change, taking their past tense forms (*would, could, had to, should, might*). This also means that *would, could, should, might* and *ought to* do not change forms when reported.

**Independent and Dependent Clauses**

A clause is a grouping of words in English that contains a subject and a verb. Clauses are the building blocks of sentences. They can be of two types: independent and dependent. It is important for the purpose of sentence formation to be able to recognise independent and dependent clauses.

Independent clauses are clauses that express a complete thought. They can function as sentences. For e.g. *'Ram left to buy supplies'* is an independent clause, and if you end it with a full stop, it becomes a sentence.

Dependent clauses, on the other hand, do not express a complete thought and thus cannot function as sentences. For e.g. *'When Ram left to buy supplies'* cannot be a sentence because it is an incomplete thought. What happened when Ram went to the shop? Here, ‘when’ functions as a ‘dependent marker word’; this term refers to words which, when added to the beginnings of independent clauses or sentences, transform them into dependent clauses. Other examples of dependent marker words are *after, although, as, as if, because, before, if, in order to, since, though, unless, until, whatever, when, whenever, whether,* and *while.*

Dependent clauses, thus, need to be combined with independent clauses to form full sentences. For e.g., *'When Ram left to buy supplies, Rohan snuck in and stole the money'* is a complete sentence.

**Grammar Rules: Avoid these common errors**

Here is a list of 5 of the most common grammatical mistakes that are made by English speakers/writers. This list is merely a quick glance; these matters are dealt with in detail as well, in appropriate sections.

1. **Subject Verb Agreement:** Learners often get confused with using the appropriate form of the verb with the subject of the sentence. For example, ‘I live in India’ and ‘He lives in India’ is the correct subject verb agreement of the verb ‘to live’.
2. **Possessive Nouns:** Non-native speakers of the English are unsure about showing possession while writing or speaking in English. For example, ‘The book belonging to the girl’ can also be referred to as ‘The girl’s book’
3. **Comparison of adjectives:** We add ‘er’ to compare short adjectives and we add ‘more’ for longer adjectives like handsome and intelligent.
4. **Punctuation mistakes:** Punctuation errors, too, are very common, especially in the use of semicolons and commas.
5. **Singular and Plural:** Many new learners make mistakes in forming the plural form of singular nouns.

**English Vocabulary**

There are more than 250,000 words in the Oxford English dictionary. This number does not include slang or technical words. However, a good English speaker would normally use only 15,000 to 20,000 of these words. If you think your vocabulary is weak, a little effort everyday over a six to nine month period can go a long way in improving it.

Top ten vocabulary improvement tips -

1. Make reading the newspaper a daily ritual. You may be comfortable reading a particular section but make an effort to read different articles on every page. The editorial page is highly recommended not only for vocabulary but also for structuring and presenting thought.

2. It is not surprising that those who read a lot develop a good vocabulary. Make it a habit to read a new book every week. You can consider becoming a member of the local library. Make a list of words that are new to you and look up their meanings in the dictionary.

3. Watching English movies and television shows is important for improving English and learning new English words. The best part about watching English videos is that you can learn the correct pronunciation as well.

4. Vocabulary cards are used by students who are trying to learn many words in a short period of time. You can make your own cards by writing the word on one side and the meaning on the other side of a square piece of paper. In your free time, it is a convenient tool to learn new words.

5. The internet is an unlimited resource for reading material. Pick up a topic of your choice and search for articles about it. You will come across plenty of material to read which you might find interesting, and importantly, will also introduce you to new words. Be sure to look them up in a dictionary.

6. The best way to ensure that you never forget the new words you learn is to start using them in your day to day conversation. Do not try to force them into a conversation but do use them if you think they are appropriate.

7. Most dictionaries provide us with pronunciations of words using phonetic symbols. It is important to learn the sounds that correspond to these phonetic symbols, in order to become comfortable pronouncing new words.

8. Learning in groups is always more fun. If you have friends who also want to improve their vocabulary, then you can form a group and share new words with each other. You can meet at regular interval and measure your progress.

9. Root words are words from which words grow with the addition of prefixes and suffixes. For eg. Even the word vocabulary is derived from the Latin root word *voc* which means 'word' or 'name'. Other words like advocacy, vocal and vociferous are also derived from the same root word. Hence, if you can recognize some root words, you will get a fair idea of many derived words. A list of  common root words is available here.

10. While it is important to read and learn new words, it is equally important to revise what you have learnt. Fix a particular day of the week to revise all the words you have learnt in that week and add them to your daily vocabulary.

**Improving Vocabulary by Learning Root Words**

The English language has its roots in languages like Greek and Latin. An understanding of the common root words will help us make educated guesses about the meaning of new words and substantially strengthen our vocabulary.

Given below is a list of commonly used root words, their meaning and some examples of words formed using these root words.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **ROOT** | **MEANING** | **EXAMPLE  WORDS** |
| Ambi | Both | * Ambidextrous – Use both hands well * Ambiguity – Double meaning, can be interpreted in more than one way |
| Aqua | Water | * Aquarium – Artificial environment for water plants and animals * Aquatic – Plant or animal living in water |
| Art | Skill | * Artistic – Natural skill in art * Artisan – Skilled manual work |
| Auto | Self | * Automatic – Working by itself * Autonomous – Having self-government |
| Bi | Two, Twice | * Biannual – Occurring twice in a year * Bigamy – Being married twice |
| Bio | Life | * Biology – Study of living things * Biohazard – Risk to living things |
| Cardio | Heart | * Cardiology – Branch of medicine dealing with the heart * Cardiovascular – Pertaining to the heart and blood vessels |
| Cent | Hundred | * Centenary – Hundredth Anniversary * Centenarian – Person who is hundred or more years old |
| Cert | Sure | * Certificate – Document attesting a fact like birth, death, graduation, marriage etc * Certitude – Feeling of certainty |
| Chrono | Time | * Chronology – Study of events in the order of their occurrence * Chronograph – Instrument that records time with high accuracy |
| Counter | Contrary | * Counter-intuitive – Contrary to intuition * Counter-productive – Having the opposite effect as intended |
| De | Remove | * Detoxify – Remove the poisonous substances * Dethrone – Remove from the throne |
| Dem | People | * Democracy – System of government elected by the people * Demography  - Statistics of births, deaths, mortality etc. of people |
| Derm | Skin | * Dermatologist – Doctor specialized in the study of skin disorders * Dermatitis – Inflammation of the skin |
| Flor | Flower | * Florist – Person who sells flowers * Floral – Decorated with flowers |
| Gastro | Stomach | * Gastritis – Inflammation of the stomach lining * Gastroenterologist – Doctor specialized in the study of stomach and intestinal disorders |
| Grat | Pleasing | * Gratify – Delight or please someone * Gratuity – Tip, token of appreciation |
| Hepa | Liver | * Hepatitis – Inflammation of the liver * Hepatic – Relating to the liver |
| Hept | Seven | * Heptagon – Figure with seven sides * Heptathlon – Athletic event having seven events |
| Hex | Six | * Hexagon – Figure with six sides * Hexavalent – Having a valency of six |
| Inter | Between | * Interconnect – Connect with each other * Interdepend – Depend on each other |
| Iso | Equal | * Isosceles – Triangle having two equal sides * Isobar – Line on map connecting points of equal barometer pressures |
| Jud | Law | * Judiciary – Collective of judges * Judgement – Decision of a court |
| Kilo | Thousand | * Kilogram – Thousand grams * Kilolitre – Thousand litres |
| Lacto | Milk | * Lactic – Obtained from mil * Lactose – Sugar occurring in milk |
| Mal | Bad | * Malevolent – Wishing bad things on others * Malice – Intention to do evil |
| Mort | Death | * Mortuary – Place where dead bodies are kept until they are cremated or buried * Mortician - Undertaker |
| Narr | Tell | * Narrate - To tell a story * Narrator - Person who tells a story. |
| Nov | New | * Novelty – Newness or originality * Novice - Beginner |
| Oct | Eight | * Octagon – Figure with eight sides * Octave – Stanza of eight lines |
| Ocu | Eye | * Ocular – Connected with the eyes * Oculist – Specialist in the medical treatment of eye disorders |
| Omni | All | * Omnipresent – Present everywhere at the same time * Omnivorous – Eating all kinds of foods |
| Ortho | Straight | * Orthodontics – Dealing with straightening of teeth * Orthopaedics – Dealing with the straightening of bones |
| Pan | All | * Panorama – An all-around view * Pandemic – Prevalent all over a country or world |
| Ped | Foot | * Pedicure – Treatment of the feet * Pedal – Foot operated lever |
| Poly | Many | * Polygon – Figure with many sides * Polygamy – Having more than one husband or wife at the same time |
| Psych | Mind | * Psychiatry – Study of mental diseases * Psych – Prepare oneself mentally for a task |
| Quad | Four | * Quadruple – Increase four times * Quadrangle – Figure having four sides |
| Quin | Five | * Quintuple – Increase five times * Quintuplet – Five children born at the same time |
| Semi | Half | * Semi-circle – Half of a circle * Semiaquatic – Animal living partly on land and partly in water |
| Sept | Seven | * Septuplet – Seven children born at the same time * Septuagenarian – People aged before 70 and 79 |
| Trans | Across | * Transpacific – Across the Pacific Ocean * Transnational – Across national boundaries |
| Tri | Three | * Triangle – Figure with three sides * Triathlon - Athletic event having three events |
| Uni | One | * Unitarian – People who believes God is one person * Unique – One of a kind |
| Vince | Conquer | * Invincible – One who cannot be conquered * Convince – Persuade a person |

**Prefixes**

Prefixes are placed before the words to modify their meanings; like suffixes, they are groups of letters that rarely serve a purpose unless attached to a word. Here is a list of commonly used prefixes to give you an idea of how to identify them.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Prefix** | **Meaning** | **Examples** |
| -a | On/in/out/from | *A*way, *a*board, *a*rise, *a*light |
| -al | all | *A*lone, *a*lready |
| -be | by | *Be*low, *be*fore |
| -by | Be/on the side | *By*pass, *by*word |
| -for | through | *for*get, *for*give |
| -fore | before | *Fore*cast, *fore*see |
| -gain | against | *Gain*say |
| -in | in | *In*side, *in*come |
| -mis | wrong | *Mis*lead, *mis*take |
| -over | Above/beyond | *over*flow, *over*charge |
| -out | out | *Out*side, *out*come |
| -to | this | *To*day, *to*night |
| -un | Not/to reverse an action | *Un*kind, *un*tie |
| -under | below | *Under*ground, *under*sell |
| -with | Against/back | *With*draw, *with*hold |
| -wel | In good condition | *Wel*come, *wel*fare |

**Suffixes**

Suffixes are placed after words to modify their meanings; like prefixes, they are groups of letters that rarely serve a purpose unless attached to a word. Here is a list of some of them to give you an idea of how to identify suffixes.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Suffix** | **Meaning** | **Examples** |
| -able/-ible | capable of | port*able*, leg*ible* |
| -ac/-ic | like/related to | cardi*ac*, Nord*ic* |
| -acy | state/quality of being | priv*acy*, legitim*acy* |
| -acious/-icious | full of | gr*acious*, mal*icious* |
| -al | related to | logic*al*, philosophic*al* |
| -ance/-ence | state/quality of being | mainten*ance*, perman*ence* |
| -dom | state/quality of being | free*dom*, king*dom* |
| -eer/-er/-or | person who | mountain*eer*, writ*er,* counsell*or* |
| -escent | becoming, to be | adol*escent*, fluor*escent* |
| -esque | like/reminiscent of | pictur*esque*, Kafka*esque* |
| -fy | to make | magni*fy*, electri*fy* |
| -iferous | containing, yielding | voc*iferous*, carbon*iferous* |
| -ise | make, become | civil*ise*, terror*ise* |
| -ish | having qualities of | hell*ish*, fiend*ish* |
| -ism | doctrine, belief, practice | favourit*ism*, commun*ism* |
| -ist | person who | chem*ist*, flor*ist* |
| -ity | state/quality of being | ingenu*ity*, odd*ity* |
| -less | without | brain*less*, end*less* |
| -ment | state/quality of being, result of action, process | enjoy*ment*, embank*ment*, abridge*ment* |
| -ness | state of being | thin*ness*, loneli*ness* |
| -oid | like | cellul*oid*, ov*oid* |
| -ose | full of | adip*ose*, verb*ose* |
| -osis | condition | hypn*osis*, psych*osis* |
| -ous | full of | illustri*ous*, nause*ous* |
| -ship | position held | friend*ship*, member*ship* |
| -sion/-tion | state/quality of being | tor*sion*, transi*tion* |
| -tude | state/quality of being | forti*tude*, certi*tude* |
| -y | characterised by | funn*y*, greed*y* |

**Collocations**

A collocation is a combination of words that are commonly used together; the simplest way of describing collocations is to say that they ‘just sound right’ to native English speakers. Other combinations that may mean the same thing would seem ‘unnatural’. Collocations include noun phrases like *stiff wind* and *weapons of mass destruction*, phrasal verbs such as *to get together* and other stock phrases such as *the rich and famous*.

It is important to learn collocations, because they are important for the naturalisation of one’s speech. Besides, they broaden one’s scope for expression.

Here is a list of collocations to help you get started:

*Have a good time.*

*Do me a favour.*

*Make a difference.*

*Take a break.*

*Break the law.*

*Catch the bus.*

*Pay your respects.*

*Save yourself the trouble.*

*Keep the change.*

*Come under attack.*

*Go bald.*

*Get the sack.*

*Bang on time.*

*From dawn till dusk.*

*Take your time.*

**Phrasal Verbs**

Phrasal verbs are combinations of words that perform the function of a verb. These combinations necessarily include a verb and either an adverb or a preposition (or both). They form one complete semantic unit because the words that comprise a phrasal verb together describe one action. For example:

**PHRASAL VERB                                                     MEANING**

            Get out                                                                         Exit

            Get together                                                               Congregate

            Get over                                                                      Recover

            Put off                                                                         Postpone

            Put down                                                                    Attribute

In each of the above cases, the phrasal verb shares no similarity with the verb that it replaces. These are ‘idiomatic’ phrasal verbs, commonly used in informal, everyday speech. Phrasal verbs are not necessarily idiomatic, though; they can be literal as well. For example, literal phrases such as *look up, walk across* and *switch off* are also considered phrasal verbs, because the action described by each cannot be described if any of the words in the phrase are omitted. If ‘up’ is taken out of ‘look up’, the description of the action will be incomplete.

**Synonyms**

Synonyms are words which have similar meanings. The meaning of these words need not be exactly the same. Most words can have one or more synonyms.

Trying to find out synonyms of new words you encounter is a good way of improving English vocabulary.

Here is a list of some synonyms,

Big – Huge

Pretty – Beautiful

Talk – Say

Little – Tiny

Tired – Exhausted

Unhappy - Sad

Lazy – Lethargic

Overweight – Fat

Shining – Radiant

Intelligent - Brainy

**Antonyms**

Antonyms are words which have almost opposite meanings. Most words can have one or more antonyms.

Each time you learn a new English word, try to find out its antonyms. This is a good way to improve your vocabulary.

Here is a list of some antonyms,

Big – Small

Pretty – Ugly

Loud – Quiet

Tall – Short

Black – White

Man – Woman

Happy – Sad

Lazy – Energetic

Overweight – Underweight

Young - Old

**Learning Foreign Language Words**

English is most dominant language in the world today, but, throughout history, it has borrowed heavily from other languages, particularly Latin and French. Below is a list of words which have been borrowed from other languages but have become part of our day to day English vocabulary.

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF INDIAN ORIGIN** |
| Bungalow |
| Cheetah |
| Dacoit |
| Guru |
| Jungle |
| Khaki |
| Loot |
| Pundit |
| Pyjama |
| Thug |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF ARABIAN ORIGIN** |
| Algebra |
| Assassin |
| Harem |
| Mattress |
| Safari |
| Sofa |
| Sultan |
| Sherbet |
| Tariff |
| Zero |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF CHINESE ORIGIN** |
| Chi |
| Chow |
| Feng Shui |
| Gung Ho |
| Ketchup |
| Kung Fu |
| Lychee |
| Silk |
| Tea |
| Tofu |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF AFRICAN ORIGIN** |
| Banana |
| Chimpanzee |
| Cola |
| Dengue |
| Jamboree |
| Jumbo |
| Mumbo Jumbo |
| Vodoo |
| Zebra |
| Zombie |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF SPANISH ORIGIN** |
| Adios |
| Cigar |
| Guerrilla |
| Hurricane |
| Lolita |
| Macho |
| Platinum |
| Ranch |
| Siesta |
| Vanilla |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF ITALIAN ORIGIN** |
| Artisan |
| Balcony |
| Cartoon |
| Dome |
| Gallery |
| Graffiti |
| Medal |
| Replica |
| Saloon |
| Villa |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF GERMAN ORIGIN** |
| Blitz |
| Frankfurter |
| Hamburger |
| Kaput |
| Kitsch |
| Kindergarten |
| Lager |
| Pilsner |
| Wanderlust |
| Zeitgeist |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF DUTCH ORIGIN** |
| Booze |
| Cookie |
| Cruise |
| Decoy |
| Excise |
| Iceberg |
| Measles |
| Smuggler |
| Yacht |
| Yankee |

|  |
| --- |
| **TEN COMMONLY USED ENGLISH WORDS OF PORTUGESE ORIGIN** |
| Breeze |
| Cashew |
| Cobra |
| Coconut |
| Commando |
| Mosquito |
| Potato |
| Samba |
| Tank |
| Teak |

# Punctuation Marks

Punctuation marks are important for both written and spoken English. In written English, the correct usage of these symbols help express the intended meaning of the sentence. In spoken English, punctuation marks denote the pauses and intonations to be used when reading aloud.

Incorrect punctuation can change the meaning of a sentence. The sentences, ‘Women, without her man, is nothing’ and ‘Woman: without her, man is nothing’ is an often used example of how the incorrect use of punctuation marks can alter the meaning a sentence.

## Symbols of Punctuation

Some of the commonly used punctuation marks are

[Full Stop](http://www.englishleap.com/punctuation/full-stop) - (.) Usually used at the end of a sentence.

[Question Mark](http://www.englishleap.com/punctuation/question-mark) - (?) Usually used at the end of an interrogative sentence to form a question.

[Comma](http://www.englishleap.com/punctuation/comma) - (,) - Usually used to denote a pause in a sentence.

[Exclamation Mark](http://www.englishleap.com/punctuation/exclamation-mark) - (!) - Used to denote shock, surprise, anger or a raised voice.

[Apostrophe](http://www.englishleap.com/punctuation/apostrophe) - (') - Used to show possession or for contraction of word.

### Semicolon (;) –Used to join two complete sentences, (Mary ate dinner; the dinner tasted good.)

### - Used with words like however, for example (Mary ate dinner; however, she was hungry an hour later)

- Used to clarify a list of items when each item has punctuation within itself (Mary's favourite dinner foods are chicken, with Cayenne pepper; salad, with Italian dressing; toast, with garlic and butter; and soup, with scallions, cheese, and mushrooms.)

Colon – (:) – Used to further explain or introduce a list (Mary's dinner reminded her of the back yard: both contained many wonderful colours and smells.)

- Used to further explain with a list (Mary's dinner consisted of the following: salad, soup, chicken, and toast.)

- Used to further explain with a quotation (The words Ivan spoke were very kind: "Mary, I made this dinner especially for you, dear.)

- Used with Ratios, Titles and Subtitles of Books, City and Publisher in Bibliographies, Hours and Minutes, and Formal Letters (Ratio: Mary's ratio of carbohydrate intake to protein was 3:1. Titles and Subtitles: Mary enjoys reading the book *Tastebud Heaven: Homemade Meals for the Distinguished Palette.* City and Publisher in Bibliography: New York: Norton, 1999 Hours and Minutes: Mary ate dinner at 9:12. Formal Letters: Dear Editor:)

**Punctuation Rules - Avoid these common errors**

Punctuation is a very important aspect of writing; good writing presupposes correct punctuation. *In*correct punctuation is the sign of weak writing, or carelessness. But this sort of thing is eminently avoidable, because punctuation is quite simple to master. Here are some basic rules to keep in mind:

1. Every sentence *must* end with a full stop.
2. Proper nouns (names of people, places, brands, etc, i.e. unique instances of a class) must *always* be capitalised.
3. When you use opening quotation marks, *do not forget* to use closing quotation marks at the end of the quoted word or phrase.
4. Quotation marks are when quoting or sometimes to convey irony, not for emphasis; emphasis is conveyed by emboldening or italicisation, followed by an exclamation mark.
5. Do not use an apostrophe when you are pluralising a word. The plural of toy is *toys*, not *toy’s*. Apostrophes are used to form contractions (*it is = it’s*) and indicate possession.
6. The ellipsis, used to indicate variously the intentional omission of a section of text, an unfinished thought, and a trailing off into silence, consists of *only* *3 dots*. It is pointless to add more dots to an ellipsis. This is excessive punctuation, which is in other words incorrect punctuation.
7. As per the rules of British English, any punctuation mark that is not part of a quoted section of text must be placed outside the quotation marks. However, in the case of direct speech, punctuation marks must be enclosed within the quotation marks.
8. Do not link independent clauses with commas. Independent clauses are groupings of words that can stand alone as sentences. For example, in *He knew how to drive, that he didn’t do it very often was a matter more nerves, not inability* both the parts before and after the comma are full sentences. In such cases, the comma is not the correct punctuation mark of connection. In needs to be replaced with a semi-colon (‘;’). The sentence becomes: *He knew how to drive; that he didn’t do it very often was matter of nerves, not inability.*
9. Use a comma after the introductory element of a sentence. The introductory element is a word or a phrase that begins a sentence by providing background, or simply modifies it. For example, *Honestly I don’t know how I managed to escape* is wrong, because the word ‘honestly’ modifies the sentence. Hence, it should be *Honestly, I don’t know how I managed to escape*.

## Use of Passive

Passive voice is used when the focus is on the action. It is not important or not known, however, who or what is performing the action. Textbooks often use this form.

Example: Passive voice My bike was stolen. (by Mary)

Active voice Mary stole my bike

In the example above, the focus is on the fact that my bike was stolen, who did it is not important.

Sometimes a statement in passive is more polite than active voice, as the following example shows:

Example: A mistake was made.

In this case, the focus is on the fact that a mistake was made, but no one is blamed for it (e.g. You have made a mistake.).

## Form of Passive

Subject + finite form of to be + Past Participle

Example: A letter was written.

When rewriting active sentences in passive voice, note the following:

* the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence
* the finite form of the verb is changed (to be + past participle)
* the subject of the active sentence becomes the object of the passive sentence (or is dropped)

**Examples of Passive**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tense** | | **Subject** | **Verb** | **Object** |
| **Simple Present** | *Active:* | Rita | writes | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | is written | by Rita. |
| **Simple Past** | *Active:* | Rita | wrote | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | was written | by Rita. |
| **Present Perfect** | *Active:* | Rita | has written | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | has been written | by Rita. |
| **Future I** | *Active:* | Rita | will write | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | will be written | by Rita. |

**Examples of Passive**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tense** | | **Subject** | **Verb** | **Object** |
| **Present Progressive** | *Active:* | Rita | is writing | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | is being written | by Rita. |
| **Past Progressive** | *Active:* | Rita | was writing | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | was being written | by Rita. |
| **Past Perfect** | *Active:* | Rita | had written | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | had been written | by Rita. |
| **Future II** | *Active:* | Rita | will have written | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | will have been written | by Rita. |
| **Conditional I** | *Active:* | Rita | would write | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | would be written | by Rita. |
| **Conditional II** | *Active:* | Rita | would have written | a letter. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | would have been written | by Rita. |

**Passive Sentences with Two Objects**

* Rewriting an active sentence with two objects in passive voice means that one of the two objects becomes the subject, the other one remains an object. Which object to transform into a subject depends on what you want to put the focus on.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Subject** | **Verb** | **Object 1** | **Object 2** |
| *Active:* | Rita | wrote | a letter | to me. |
| *Passive:* | A letter | was written | to me | by Rita. |
| *Passive:* | I | was written | a letter | by Rita. |

* .
* As you can see in the examples, adding *by Rita* does not sound very elegant. That’s why it is usually dropped.
* **Personal and Impersonal Passive**
* *Personal Passive* simply means that the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence. So every verb that needs an object (transitive verb) can form a personal passive.
* Example: They build houses. – Houses are built.
* Verbs without an object (intransitive verb) normally cannot form a personal passive sentence (as there is no object that can become the subject of the passive sentence). If you want to use an intransitive verb in passive voice, you need an impersonal construction – therefore this passive is called *Impersonal Passive*.
* Example: he says – it is said
* *Impersonal Passive* is not as common in English as in some other languages (e.g. German, Latin). In English, *Impersonal Passive* is only possible with verbs of perception (e. g. say, think, know).
* Example: They say that women live longer than men. – It is said that women live longer than men.
* Although *Impersonal Passive* is possible here, *Personal Passive* is more common.
* Example: They say that women live longer than men. – Women are said to live longer than men.
* The subject of the subordinate clause (women) goes to the beginning of the sentence; the verb of perception is put into passive voice. The rest of the sentence is added using an infinitive construction with 'to' (certain auxiliary verbs and *that* are dropped).
* Sometimes the term *Personal Passive* is used in English lessons if the indirect object of an active sentence is to become the subject of the passive sentence.

**Sentences**

Experienced writers use a variety of sentences to make their writing interesting and lively. Too many simple sentences, for example, will sound ‘choppy’ and immature while too many long sentences will be difficult to read and hard to understand.

**Simple sentences (subject + verb)**

A simple sentence, also called an **independent clause**, contains a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought. In the following simple sentences, subjects are in yellow, and verbs are in green.

|  |
| --- |
| A. Some students like to study in the mornings.  B. Juan and Arturo play football every afternoon. C. Alicia goes to the library and studies every day. |

The three examples above are all simple sentences.  Note that sentence B contains a compound subject, and sentence C contains a compound verb.  Simple sentences, therefore, contain a

subject and verb and express a complete thought, but they can also contain a compound subjects or verbs.

**Compound sentence**

A compound sentence contains two independent clauses joined by a conjunction (coordinators). The coordinators are as follows: *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*. (Helpful hint: The first letter of each of the coordinators spells *FANBOYS*.) In the following compound sentences, subjects are in yellow, verbs are in green, and the coordinators and the commas that precede them are in red.

|  |
| --- |
| A.  I tried to speak Spanish, and my friend tried to speak English.   B.  Alejandro played football, so Maria went shopping.   C.  Alejandro played football, for Maria went shopping. |

The above three sentences are compound sentences.  Each sentence contains two independent

Note how the conscious use of coordinators can change the relationship between the clauses.  Sentences B and C, for example, are identical except for the coordinators.  In sentence B, which action occurred first?  Obviously, "Alejandro played football" first, and as a consequence, "Maria went shopping.  In sentence C, "Maria went shopping" first.  In sentence C, "Alejandro played football" because, possibly, he didn't have anything else to do, *for* or *because* "Maria went shopping."  How can the use of other coordinators change the relationship between the two clauses?

**Complex sentences**

A complex sentence has an independent clause joined by one or more dependent clauses. A

complex sentence always has a subordinator such as *because, since, after, although,* or *when* or a relative pronoun such as *that, who,* or *which*. In the following complex sentences, subjects are in yellow, verbs are in green, and the subordinators and their commas (when required) are in red.

|  |
| --- |
| A. When he handed in his homework, he forgot to give the teacher the last page.   B. The teacher returned the homework after she noticed the error.  C. The students are studying because they have a test tomorrow. D. After they finished studying, Juan and Maria went to the movies.  E. Juan and Maria went to the movies after they finished studying. |

When a complex sentence begins with a subordinator such as sentences A and D, a comma is required at the end of the dependent clause. When the independent clause begins the sentence with subordinators in the middle as in sentences B, C, and E, no comma is required. If a comma is placed before the subordinators in sentences B, C, and E, it is wrong.

Note that sentences D and E are the same except sentence D begins with the dependent clause which is followed by a comma, and sentence E begins with the independent clause which contains no comma.  The comma after the dependent clause in sentence D is required, and experienced *listeners* of English will often *hear* a slight pause there.  In sentence E, however,

there will be no pause when the independent clause begins the sentence.

**Complex sentences/adjective clauses**

Finally, sentences containing adjective clauses (or dependent clauses) are also complex because they contain an independent clause and a dependent clause.  The subjects, verbs, and subordinators are marked the same as in the previous sentences, and in these sentences, the independent clauses are also underlined.

|  |
| --- |
| A. The woman who called my mom sells cosmetics. B. The book that Jonathan read is on the shelf. C. The house which Abraham  Lincoln was born in is still standing. D. The town where I grew up is in the United States. |